

come to fill a larger and larger part in his life, contribute a very great deal to his *social* development, through the deflection and diffusion of anxiety which they make possible. It is a familiar fact to any experienced teacher of young children that children's emotional relations with each other improve as their actual skill in activity and expression grows, and this has been clearly shown in some of my quoted data.

(u) These modes of deflecting emotion and allaying anxiety, which free the mind of the child for real relations with adults or other children, thus further the development of his sense of reality in all directions. A greater sense of reality in his relations to people is one of those cumulative changes which become so substantial round about six to seven years that they make the attitude of the older child appear very different from what it is at the height of his emotional conflict.

This development of a social ego is not, however, only a function of the child's relations with other people. It has its beginnings in the very early days, from the child's first contact with the actual physical world. That there is this real contact with the physical world even in the early days of infancy cannot be doubted. As soon as the child's perceptions and movements gain any degree of organisation, he becomes aware of the physical world as such, which differs from the world of people precisely in that it cannot be affected or controlled by those cries and gestures and "magical" means which will affect and control human beings.

As I pointed out in *Intellectual Growth in Young Children*, "The child makes a partial discovery of the limits which the physical world sets to his activities surely almost as early as he comes to know other human beings as persons. The disappointments and sense of impotence which

things force upon
him are as much a part of his education as the
denials and
thwartings suffered at the hands of adults. The
burnt child
dreads the fire even in the stage of
egocentrism. Only in
the very earliest months can it be true that
human relation-
ships hold the stage completely. At least from
the weaning
period onwards, the physical world must have
some part in
the organisation of experience and in the fixing
of cognitive
patterns ; and increasingly so as development
proceeds. . . .

" Whilst it is certainly true that the *first* value
which the
physical world has for the child is as a canvas
upon which to
project his personal wishes and anxieties, and
that his first